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To the family and friends of Troy,

I would like to share with you a little about Troy as I knew him in Colorado. It is my hope that in this time of grief there may be some comfort to you as you read these words just as I am hoping that the exercise of writing them helps bring some comfort to me.

My original introduction to Troy, which was only about a year ago, was not an accident. I was considering a LongEZ aircraft for my next plane and was asking around for people who knew a lot about them. All my enquiries pointed to Troy. Although there are a number of people in this area who own or otherwise have experience with these airplanes, everyone spoke of Troy as the recognized expert.

Over the course of the last year, what started as a simple discussion about the merits and drawbacks of an airplane has grown into a friendship that meant a lot to me. However, I was but one of many people here who considered themselves friends of Troy.

I came to discover that the respect people have for Troy extended far beyond his knowledge of LongEZs. Although not certified as an aircraft mechanic (thus constraining Troy to work only on experimental aircraft) I, and others, consider his abilities in this area to be superior to those of many certified mechanics in our area.

His abilities as a pilot were similarly held in high regard. Recently, Troy began work as the test pilot for a program developing a jet-powered version of a Berkut aircraft (an aircraft similar, though more modern, than a LongEZ). He was very excited about this opportunity and looking forward to the day when the taxi testing would be complete and first flight would occur.

Another aspect of Troy was his unfailing helpfulness. He was quick to offer a helping hand as soon as a need was apparent. This occurred regardless of the number of other activities in which he was already involved. I benefited from this many times. And, as you might imagine, this resulted in Troy being very busy all the time.

He would always make time, however, for himself when it came to exercise. He loved riding his bike and once he discovered that I could be talked into long Sunday rides, we started riding together. He was a friendly, not competitive, riding companion, which I appreciated (I'm 49 and NOT a triathlete).

Troy was working toward his dream of being a career pilot and I had no doubts (which may have been fewer than he had) that he was going to achieve his dream. He was preparing to start college classes again (via correspondence classes) as he viewed finishing his college degree a prerequisite for a career pilot. He was not following a typical path though career development. He created a life and career path that was uniquely his and all of us around him benefited as a result.

I learned a lot from Troy. He had high standards in everything he did and he seemed not to understand it when others did not. As a result he brought out the best in those around him.

I would be remiss if I didn't also mention one of his most notable characteristics. He was fun to be around. He had a powerful influence on me and I had great expectations for the times we were to have together in the future. I can't imagine the grief felt by all of you who knew him for longer than I.

Someone at Troy's Colorado wake/memorial overheard me discussing my recent thoughts about trying to balance "Life is uncertain, live it to the fullest" with "Life is dangerous, don't take unnecessary risks" and commented, "The pictures on that table over there show how life is supposed to be lived". The tabletop was covered with pictures of Troy.

In thanks for my time with Troy and in sorrow at his passing,